

Developing a Different Attitude To Problems

1. The fault of seeing only problems

- When something's a little off about the way a person looks or dresses, something's not quite in line with our idea of how things should be, given food a little cold...
- ...the **self-centered mind** habitually makes such small problems into large ones
This habit of thinking makes our mind heavy, unhappy, so that eventually, "all appearances arising as the enemy."
- We need to **recognize** that WE have trained our mind to think like this
- And instead, learn to see "all appearances arising as the friend/teacher," like Milarepa

2. Seeing the Benefit of Problems

- Recognize there's is no benefit in labeling something "a problem"
- Remembering there's no benefit, instead apply mind training
- **Shantideva**: Why be unhappy, angry, depressed if something can be remedied?
- **Strong determination**: "From now on, I won't get irritated. I'll see problems as positive."
- Eventually, we'll see problems as something desirable, like ice cream
- In that way, our problems become enjoyable, easy to bear

3. Seeing Problems as Joyful

It is **essential to be well prepared** before actually meeting miserable conditions, since being able to use them as a basis for virtue and happiness is extremely difficult.



**You must clearly recognize that
your problems are actually
necessary conditions for your
practice of virtue...**

*As long as you see something as a problem and allow it to irritate you... **YOU** cause that problem to disturb your mind.*



Developing a Different Attitude to Problems

1. **The fault of seeing only problems**
2. **Seeing the Benefit of Problems**
3. **Seeing Problems as Joyful**
 - a. **Prepare well** before we meet problems → easily apply MMT
 - b. Problems are actually **necessary conditions** for our practice of virtue
 - c. When we label “a problem,” **WE cause it to disturb our mind**
 - d. Seeing a “problem” as benefitting us makes us happy
 - e. Whether a situation is wonderful or miserable **depends on how our mind perceives and interprets it**



“Stopping the thought of disliking problems and generating the thought of liking them makes our mind **happy!**”

Put all your effort into looking at the benefit of problems.

Whether a life situation is wonderful or not depends on the way your mind perceives and interprets it.

You can choose whether to label an experience “wonderful” or “problematic.”

It depends completely on our mind, our interpretation.



Ch. 3: Happiness and Suffering Are Created by Your Mind

Happiness and suffering are dependent upon your mind, upon your interpretations.

They do not come from outside, from others.

All of your happiness and all of your suffering are created by you, by your own mind.

Ch. 3: Happiness and suffering are created by your own mind

1. Our happiness and suffering are dependent on our **motivation**.
2. Happiness and suffering are **the manifestation of emptiness**; All experiences, good or bad, are simply the gathering of causes and conditions.

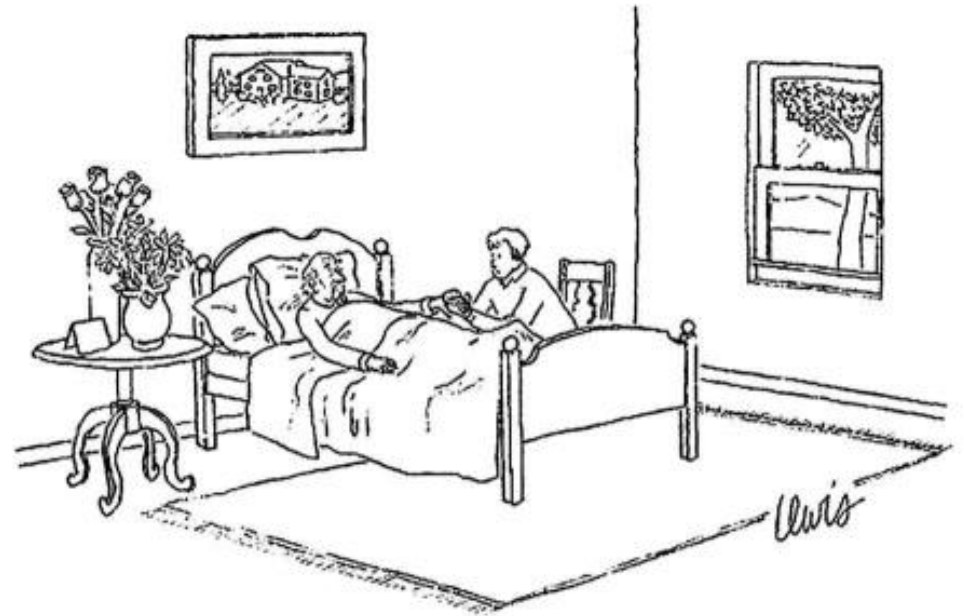
Spiritual practice? Or not?

Whether something is a spiritual practice or not is not determined by the type of activity, such as meditating, prostrating, praying, or reciting mantras.

It's determined by the reason, the **motivation**, for doing it.



With few exceptions, all actions we perform with our body, speech, and mind out of **worldly concern**—concern only for our own happiness in this life alone—**are non-virtuous and thus result in suffering.**



“I should have bought more crap”

All actions of body, speech, and mind
done with the wish that....

- * **seeks happiness beyond this life,**
- * seeks the happiness of future lives, or
- * seeks the happiness of all beings,
...are **virtuous.**

If you closely examine your own experience, you will see that happiness and suffering are dependent upon your mind, upon your interpretation of events and circumstances.



“You are the creator of your own
happiness and suffering!”

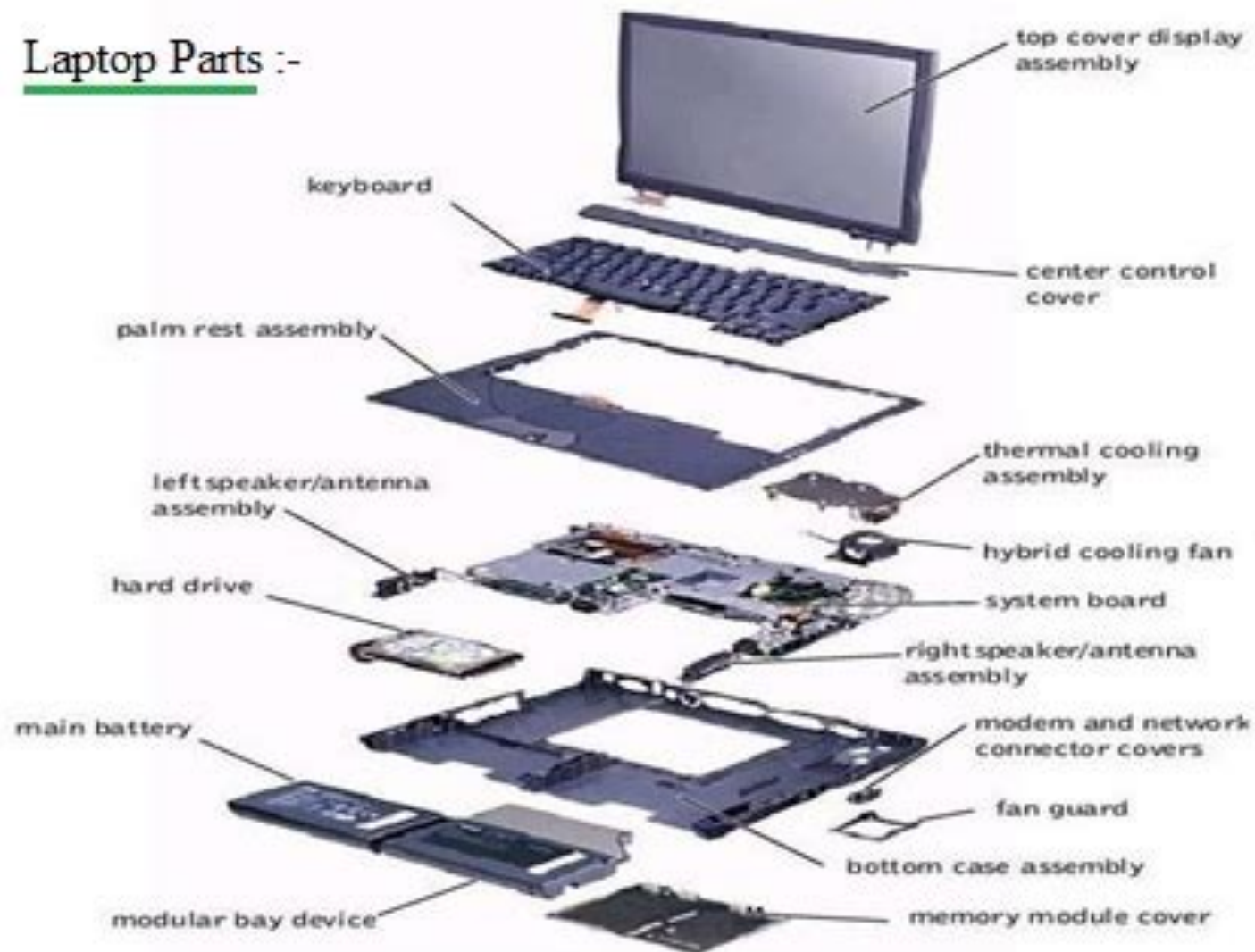
– Lama Zopa Rinpoche

* By recognizing **the benefits of sufferings**, you are able to identify sufferings as good, and **this will bring you happiness.**

* But this happiness depends entirely upon properly understanding the benefits of problems and then, on that basis, identifying problematic situations as good.

The subject, this problem that I'm experiencing
is a cause for my happiness
because it's benefitting my practice of virtue.

Laptop Parts :-



- Without the five aggregates as the basis upon which to impute 'person,' even if the thought that labels "I" arises, the I would not exist.
- And without the thought that labels "I" on the basis of the aggregates—there would just be aggregates. An "I" would not exist.



- Actually, the way the self exists is not the slightest bit more than this.
- In reality, the “I” is only what is merely imputed by thought on the basis of the aggregates.

“All experiences, good or bad, are simply the gathering of causes and conditions.”

We label our experiences, and the mere label that we have imputed then appears to exist from its own side, independent of our mind.

In reality, nothing exists from its own side; nothing exists independently. Everything is empty of existing from its own side.

What this means ... there is no point at all in becoming attached or angry in response to anything that occurs. Because our experiences are empty of existing in this way, we don't have to experience them as problems. We can totally abandon disturbing thoughts.